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Academic Senate Minutes - December 1, 2000

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

DAYTON, OHIO

MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

December 1, 2000

KU 331, 3:00 pm

Presiding: George Miner

Senators Present: Burrows, Cherrington, Conte, Cox, Dandaneau, DeConnick, Doyle, Dries, Dunne, Eimermacher, Erdei, Geiger, Gerla, Hary, Ilg, Islam, Korte, Miner, Morman, Mott, Pedrotti, Pestello, Weaver, Youngkin, Yungblut

Guests: Adams, Bartley, Crum, Grover, Hall, Hargadon, Kearns, Markland, Papp, Saliba, Schuerman, Stencel, Walker, Westendorf

1. Opening Prayer: The meeting opened with a moment of silence and the Lord's Prayer.

2. Roll Call: Twenty-five of thirty-seven Senators were present.

3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of October 13, 2000 were approved as written.

4. Introduction of New Senators: The Provost introduced the new Senators and thanked the outgoing Senators for their work. A special recognition was given to George Miner, who served on the Senate for 16 years.

5. Committee Reports – Fall 2000 Final Reports

Academic Policies Committee

The APC finished work on the Quantitative Reasoning Competencies (I-00-

10). The policy was passed by the Senate on October 13, 2000.

Activities still under consideration by the APC include increasing the number of classes in the calendar, specifically raising the MWF/TTh class meetings from 43/29 to 44/29 class meetings per semester (I-00-21). They are also keeping oversight on the General Education and Competency Committee as they review General Education.

Faculty Affairs Committee

The FAC submitted a proposal to allow Lecturer Representation on the Senate (I-98-24). It passed on October 13, 2000. Because it is a change in the Constitution of the Senate, it must go to the faculty for a vote – winter 2001 semester. The committee also reviewed the Policy on Fair, Responsible, and Acceptable Use of Electronic Equipment (I-98-17).

Activities still under consideration by the FAC include a review of Faculty Workload Guidelines (I-00-13). It is interviewing members of the Faculty Development Committee, and has requested workload information from each unit.

The FAC is also reviewing how non-academic administrators are evaluated as far as their contribution to the academic mission (I-98-24), and how the role of deans and the provost should impact the tenure decisions (I-00-09).

Student Academic Policies Committee

The SAPC has investigated alternate grading schemes with the possibility of changing the present one used by UD (I-00-16). Lists of advantages and disadvantages relative to changing to some type of +/- grading scheme were offered. Also a rationale was developed for one particular scheme.

Other activities included suggestions concerning the Policy on Fair, Responsible and Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources (I-98-17), and a rejection of an attendance policy for sophomores (I-00-15). Finally, the committee is looking at the possibility of having SGA Academic Senators also serve as Student Senators on the Academic Senate (I-00-24).

6. Alcohol Policy 1-00-14

A Report on Alcohol and Alcohol Abuse, along with five suggestions on how the Academic Senate could support the proposals made in the report, were discussed. The follow points were made.

1. The number of Friday classes (8:00 am to 3:00 pm) should be increased to be comparable with the number of Monday through Thursday classes. Too many students view university life as a four-day workweek and start the weekend on Thursday night.

a. There are already many classes scheduled for Friday.

b. An attendance policy by the instructor would encourage the students to show up.

c. Tests on Fridays would help.

d. Chairs should schedule more Friday classes.

e. Some faculty are absent on Fridays.

f. Some faculty teach only MWF or TTh classes.

g. We must address a change in the culture so that students and faculty realize that Friday is a normal workday.

h. Maybe there are too many service activities for the students to get involved in; they don't have time for academics.

i. Some students do not schedule Friday classes because they want to intern, or have other important activities.

j. More Friday classes may impact Campus Ministry programs.

2. Faculty should hold students accountable for academic performance on Fridays.

a. No comments

3. The university should have more classes on Fridays after 3:00 pm.

a. There are special seminars already scheduled for 3:00 pm on Friday. Outside speakers would have a problem if they had to come during the week.

b. The Department of Accounting schedules block exams on Friday at 3:00 pm.

c. It is doubtful that a different common meeting time would solve the

Thursday night drinking problem.

d. Students who drink on Thursday night are typically sober by 3:00 pm Friday.

e. If students could schedule 18 hours (six three-hour courses) without an extra tuition charge, it is likely there would be greater academic awareness. More studying would take place. Other Senators expressed strong support.

4. The Learning-Teaching Center and Faculty Development Committee should work with the Coordinator of the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs to educate the faculty about the existing problems and resources available.

a. Good idea

b. The whole faculty must buy into it.

5. Student Development and Academic Divisions should work together to develop "social norming."

a. Change wording to reflect that a majority (not a significant number) of students and faculty do not abuse alcohol or drugs.

b. Emphasize that "social norming" at UD could be service activities.

c. The senate should stress that the norm should be academic excellence.

d. Put less emphasis on group activities, and more on hard studying.

A vote was taken on each of the five items. A yes vote meant agreement.

1. Yes 24 No 0 Abstain 0

2. Yes 24 No 0 Abstain 0

3. Yes 7 No 13 Abstain 0

4. Yes 24 No 0 Abstain 0

5. Yes 24 No 0 Abstain 0 (wording change as 5.a)

7. Alternative Grading System – 1-00-16

The SAPC submitted its findings concerning the possibility of changing the grading scheme at UD by adding +/- grades. The information included:

1. Grading schemes at 78 colleges were given (24 were the same as UD, 54 had an alternative scheme).
2. The undergraduate grading distribution at UD in the winter 2000 semester was: A 43.1%, B 33.9%, C 16.3%, D 4.4%, F 2.3%, GPA \cong 3.1
3. Advantages and disadvantages of adopting a +/- grading scheme were cited.
4. A suggested grading scheme (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F) with a rationale was offered.

Comments were made as follows.

1. Grade inflation is obvious with so many A's and B's.
2. The present grading scheme lacks precision; it is not fair.
3. Students will be more motivated to study hard for a B+, rather than settle for a B, or not study and get a B-.
4. If students work harder for the C+ or B+, it might help reduce the alcohol problem.
5. It will be difficult to distinguish between grades such as a B and a B+.
6. A low B and a high B are two significantly different levels of achievement and should be recognized as a B- and a B+.
7. Some graduate programs would not use +/- grades.
8. Faculty or programs are free to use or not use +/- grades.
9. If some faculty do not use +/- grades, it would be an injustice to those students who obtained a good number of A-'s compared to those whose low A is still an A.
10. Students will have more reason to complain over such small numerical differences between grades.
11. There will be less high GPA's, which may be good because there are too

many A's now.

12. Good students will work harder to earn the A, rather than the A-.

13. Some students, who now pigeonhole themselves as B students, may become B+ students.

14. Faculty will have to put more effort into grading because they will have to distinguish between more grade classifications.

15. Do not sell +/- grades as a cure-all for grade inflation or alcohol problems; but it may help.

16. We should encourage all instructors to use +/- grades.

A straw vote was taken to determine if the senate would like to adopt some type of +/- grading scheme. Yes 21 No 0 Abstain 3

8. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted: George R. Doyle, Jr., Secretary of the Academic Senate